Why not Telegram?

Long story short

Because it is as bad as WhatsApp and Facebook. This is a false promise of encryption. See the following screenshot where they look at group messages and can go as far as censoring them. Conclusion: move to Element.

Hmm, I need more info

More proof of Telegram using your data without your consent: https://pocketnow.com/stop-being-naive-when-it-comes-to-things-like-whatsapp-telegram-signal-etc It is centralised. All your data (messages, profile info) is stored in Telegram servers and they can essentially do anything they want with it without you knowing it. They are actively mining the data in messages for censoring, so this is a red line that we cannot cross. Enough, too much has been compromised, let's own our data.

Why Matrix / Element?

Long story short

It is like the kryptonite of censorship. Think of it as P2P but instead of sharing movies and songs, you share messages. Each person owns their messages and shares them only with whom they want. The data is located in all participating servers and they communicate via *end-to-end encrypted* (E2EE) messages to the other people on other servers. The message is only decrypted when the user opens it, and only on their verified devices. If it is an encrypted chat, the server you are registered with cannot even read your messages, only you can. True freedom. And it is easier to setup than you think.

Hmm, I need more info

- **Q- Seems like a hassle.** *A- It is as easy as signing up for Telegram.*
- **Q- Will I lose access to Telegram?** *A- No. From Matrix you can have access to bridged Telegram rooms. This is possible but* **not recommended** *because in that conversation, since it's going to Telegram, it is not secure anymore. Moreover, telegram bridged rooms can't be encrypted currently.*
- **Q- None of my friends are on it.** *A- It is the chicken and the egg problem. We guarantee you will know more people on Matrix than on Telegram within six months. It is the future of private talks. Encourage everyone you communicate with to get on it, and continue communicating with them via Matrix only.*
- **Q- Why have Matrix and Element? Seems complicated.** *A- Element is just the phone/PC app (sometimes called "client implementation" by geeks). It is developed by a bunch of cool people and has new features all the time. It is slick and user friendly, just like WhatsApp/Telegram, etc. However, when you create an account on these platforms you sign away all your data, whereas this is not the case with Matrix/Element. You create an account by just choosing a username, no phone number or other personal data is required (providing an email address is recommended to help with password recovery). Your account will then reside in a Matrix server and that's where your data lives, encrypted with your master key. Period. If you were that paranoid you could even create your*

own server and now only you have your data. Then you use that account to sign into Element. Simple... And it's even simpler than this makes it out to be.

- **Q- But it's only federated, not decentralized!** *A- Yes, that is a valid argument. Federation means that people install their own servers that will participate in the network of other federated servers, and thus it's a lesser form of decentralization. The problem with true decentralization is, right now it is hard to achieve it on a wide scale. Think about it: can you run a bitcoin wallet 24/7 on your phone with having the ENTIRE blockchain (currently ~320GB and growing) on it? Could you afford the data synchronization costs in your cellphone plan, or your battery drain? That said, we of course encourage truely decentralized technologies, but in our eyes they're just not there yet. On a side note, the Matrix guys are already planning Matrix clients to work as micro federated servers.*

Getting Started with Matrix

This is actually much simpler than I thought at first. Think of it this way. Create account on a federated homeserver, and then use it with one of the clients: Desktop, Web, Android, IOS.

Recommended way (slightly more complicated)

The more people that are on different servers, the more robust the decentralisation is. So the first step is... **don't download Element, yet**. Go to this website and choose a server first: publiclist.anchel.nl When you see one that you like, click on the right where it says "client" in the column called "[web]" and then create an account with them.

Now you'll have:

1. Your homeserver.
2. Your account in the format of @your-chosen-username:your-homeserver.org. This is the format of a Matrix user account, through which you will be reachable on Matrix.
3. Your chosen password.

   > *Desktop: you can log in in the web app or desktop app with your username (see above) and password. Mobile: download Element on your mobile or if you are on the PC just continue after those instructions to log in.*

Simple way (not recommended because of centralization)

Just download the Element app, create an account (it defaults to Matrix.org), and you are in!

Important!

At your first login, the app will nag you to "set up your encryption keys". This ensures that the decryption keys will get stored on the server, **encrypted with your password**. You can choose to skip this, but it will keep asking you again on each login, and you won't be able to see message history in the joined rooms until you get this done. **Keep your generated master key passphrase just as secured as your user name and password!**

At your subsequent logins on sessions you newly set up (a *new session* means logging in on another Android/IOS/Desktop/Web apps) the app will ask you to verify your newly logged in session. This ensures that even if someone else figures out your account data, they won't have access to your history, and you will know that someone else is using your account. You can verify your new session with either using the aforementioned master password, or using another existing session on other devices.

Finding Freedom Cells on Element

Element only

The main room is the Global room. [#freedomcells.world:kde.org](#) Regional EU: [#freedomcells.eu:kde.org](#) National: **Note**: At the National level people may want to vet you because there is more sensitive and personal information being shared, so some rooms are invite only. The admins of the National rooms are on the European or Global rooms so if you want to join, ask for an invite there. If the below links fail (say the room is not available, then it is because you need to be invited (see above).

Country / Region	Room
Portugal	Invite only, please ask for it in the EU room.
Hungary	Invite only, please ask for it in the EU room.
Germany	[#FreedomCellsGermany:matrix.org](#)
Switzerland	***Needs link***
Spain	#libertadespana:rainbo.ws - ***Check table below for repeat entry***

Rooms on Element that are bridged to a room in Telegram

Country / Region	Room
Europe	#freedomcellsofeurope:rainbo.ws
Scandinavia	[#FCScandinavian:matrix.dapor.net](#)
Spain	[#libertadespana:rainbo.ws](#)

Linking a room in Element to a room in Telegram

Just let the bots do all the work for you:

1. In each room, invite the correct bot.
   - In the Telegram room, an admin should add a bot called *"Matrix Telegram Bridge"*.
   - In the Element room an admin should invite a bot called *"Telegram Bridge"*.
2. Go to the Telegram room and type exactly this message: `/id@matrix_t2bot` . The bot in the Telegram room will then shoot out a number for you. (For example: *-12345*).
3. Go to the Element room and send a message saying: `bridge -12345` . **Note**: *in reality you put the number you got from the Telegram bot*.

4. If the connection was successful, the bot in the Element room will reply *"That Telegram chat has no existing portal. To confirm bridging the chat to this room, use* `continue` ". If that is the case, send a message saying `continue` and you are done. The two rooms are connected!

Element tips and tricks

My messages are not visible to others

For encrypted rooms, it could be the case that your messages are not visible to others. This could be due to a variety of reasons:

- The first thing to try is to have the following turned off. (If it is already off, turn it on, exit settings, go back to settings and turn it back off). ***Image missing?***

- If this has not fixed your problem then you need to secure your encryption keys. (See above on how to setup encryption keys) ***Link, image or section missing?*** (#setup-encryption-keys).

For Android: How to install Element through F-Droid

What is F-Droid?

F-Droid is an installable catalogue of FOSS (Free and Open Source Software) applications for the Android platform. The client makes it easy to browse, install, and keep track of updates on your device. Put more simply, it is a replacement for Google Play Store.

You can download the F-Droid apk here.

Also, you can download Element here.